A comfortable Sermon of Faith, in temptations and afflictions.

Preached at S. Botulphes wythout Aldersgate in London, the xv. of February, 1573. By Maister William Fulke, Doctor of Diuinitie.

1. IOHN. 5. 4.

Euery thing that is borne of God ouercõmeth the world: and this is the victory that ouercõmeth the world, euen our faith.

(.C.)

Imprinted at London by John Awdely,

346:99

¶ To the right worshipfull and godly Gentlewoman Maistres Mary Harrys Wydowe.

I haue alwaies lyked wel (as you know) the playne dealyng of our friende Maister Fulke wyth the scriptures of God, which is so much the more commendable in hym, as he is better able to make a shewe in the perswasible woordes of mans wisedome, if he were disposed. For although he be ignorant of no kinde of learnyng, by which a man might set foorth hym selfe vnto the world, and vnderstandeth more straunge languages then a great number of our Brethren: yet when he sheweth the testimony of God, he taketh not vpon hym to knowe anye thyng as S. Paule sayth, but Jesus Christ, and hym crucified. For by this foolishnes of preaching the wysedome,

power, and goodnes of God appeareth greatest, and woorketh most effectually in them that are the children of God. And therefore I marualle not, if you whych haue heard him & others that vse the same simplicity in teaching, do couet to heare them styll, where as many are more desirous of varietye to delight their itching eares, then carefull of sound Doctrine, to conuert theyr synfull hartes. But wher as you were not onelye content to haue hearde thys Sermon preached once at saint Botulphes without Aldersgate in London, but that you did instantly desire to haue the copye thereof, that you might reade it oftē: as it was godly for you to require it, so it was hard for me to obtayne it. For our friend wyll sooner be intreated to preache ten sermons, then to write one. Neuertheless at the length, by manye per-

perſwasions hee was ouercome to put it in wryting, ſo that I got the copy out of hys handes, which new I ſend vnto you, not doubtyng but you wyll vſe it, both to the renuyng of your own remembraunce, and to the profit of many others.

I neede not to adde any commendation of the matter, eſpecially to you whych knoweth it, and as to any others, I wyſhe them firſt to reade it, and then to iudge of it as they ſhall fynde it. Thus I commit you to God.

Yours to commaund in the Lord. I. Y.

¶ A Sermon preached in S. Botulphes Church without Aldersgate in London, the 15. day of February. 1573. by Maister Wylliam Fulke Doctor of Diuinitie.

Mathew. 15. 21.

¶ And Iesus departing from thēce, went aside into the partes of Tyre and Sydon. 22 And behold a certain woman which was a Cananite, comming out of those quarters, cryed out vnto him saying: Haue mercy vpō me Lord thou sonne of Dauid, my daughter is piteously tormented with a Diuell. 23 But he answered her not a word. And hys Disciples came vnto hym, and besought hym, saying: Send her away, for she cryeth after vs. 24 But he answered and sayd, I was not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. 25 Then she came and woorshipped hym saying: Lord helpe me. 26 But he answered: It is not good to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to Dogs. 27 But she sayd: True Lord, but yet the dogs eate of the crooms that fall from theyr Lordes table. 28 Then Iesus answered and said vnto her: O woman, great is thy fayth: Be it vnto thee as thou wylt. And her daughter was healed from the same houre.

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This part of scripture (beloued in our saviour Christ) declareth how our saviour Christ began to shew some bryght beames of his grace vnto the Gentils. For al though the ful time wer not yet come, that he should shew him selfe openly vnto the whole worlde, yet by this and suche like examples he would geue some foretaste of hys goodnes, which afterward should be offered vniuersally. Euen as the Sun before it ascende in the Morning aboue the vpper face of the earth where we dwel, yet casteth vp some beames of hys lyght, whereby we know that he shall shortly arise: so our saviour Christ, by stretching forth some fruit of hys grace vnto the heathen, would geue good hope of that cõmon mercye, which shortly afterward was exhibited both to the Iewes & the Gentils indifferently. Which thyng is both profitable and comfortable for vs that are of the Gentiles to consider, that we may know by what meanes and degrees the Gospel, which is the power of God to saluation, was brought vnto vs.

Ther is also set forth in this Gospel a wonderfull cõmendation of a most strong & inuincible faith, in a woman that was a Cananite, to set forth the great infidelitye & ingratitude of the Iewes, that were the chosen people of God: that by comparyng them together, we

might

might vnderstand how iustly the Iewes were depriued of the promised redemption, which so disdaynfully reiected it beyng offered, that the Heathen so wyllingly embraced whē they heard of it. Which thing also we may note in the occasion of his departure out of the land of Iewry into the partes of Tyre and Sydon, which the Euangelist describeth to be this, in the beginning of this chapter. The Scribes & Pharises that came from Ierusalem, picked a quarel against him; because his Disciples did eate with vnwashed hands, wherby they trāsgressed the tradition of the Elders: our saui- our Christ in defence of his disciples, chargeth the Scribes & Pharises which wer so zealous to mayntaine their own ceremonies, ẏ they wers careles to breake the cōmaundement of God. And so it cōmeth to passe alwaies, that they which are most earnest in vpholding and defendyng traditions & ceremonies inuented by man, are most forgetful in kepyng the commaundementes of God. But this is the iust iudgement of God against those that inuent a new worship of their own brayne: That first they leese their labour, that sa seke to please God: & secondly that they are depriued of all right vnderstanding, because they haue presumed to be wiser then God. And therfore our sauiour Christ confuteth them by the testimo-

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nys of Esay, where God complaineth that the hypocritical people came neare vnto him with their mouth, & honoured him with their lyps, but their hart was far frō him: And, in vains do they worship me (sayth God) whyle they teach doctrines that are the precepts of men. Therfore I wil againe do a marusilous work in this people, euen a maruelous worke and a wonder: for the wisedome of their wyse men shall perish, and the vnderstanding of the prudent men shalbe hyd. And as the same Prophet threatneth in another place: Their eyes shall be blynded that they shall not see, their eares stopped that they shall not heare, their harts made grosse ý they shal not vnderstand, least they see with their eyes, and vnderstand with their hartes and be conuerted, and God should heale them. This got the hye Priests, Scribes & Pharises by multiplying their ceremonies, & namely ablutions and washings. It is true that God in the law cōmaunded diuers ablutions & washings, which did rather testify their vncleanes, thē purge away their filthines: but they had added many others, as washing of cups & cruises, dishes & platters, brasen vessels and tables, & often washing of their hands before they did eate, & especially if they had come from the market, they might not eate before they had washed their hands,

Esay. 29

Esay. 6.

Leuit.

Num.

Mark.

which thinges they obserued not as ciuyl cu-
stomes, partaining to bodely cleanlynes, but
as religious ceremonies belonging to inward
holines: and therfore our sauiour Christ doth
so sharply reproue them. And least the simple
mindes of his Disciples & other the good trac-
table people should haue any more scruple of
conscience in such vayne outward obseruati-
ons, he declareth that true holynes consisteth
in no such matter: For that which entreth in
to the mouth, defileth not the man, but those
thynges that come out of the mouth, are they
which defile a man. For such meates as are
receiued into the mouth, they are caryed into
the stomacke, and from thence are cast into
the draught, so ỹ they come not nere the soule
and spirit of man: but those things that come
out of the mouth (as euil deuises, whordoms,
adulteries, murthers, thefts, slaunders, false-
witnes bearing, blasphemies, and such other)
they come from the hart & soule of man, and
therfore they polute a man in dede. Wher-
fore when the proud & disdainful Scribes and
Pharises were offended with his wordes, he
willed his Disciples to let thē alone as blinde
guides of the blind, & he him selfe departed frō
them into the coastes of Tyre & Sydon. His
purpose was according to the wil of his man-
Marke 7. hod, as S. Mark declareth, to haue bene secret,

and

and not openly knowē. For although he was appointed of God to be the light of ỳ Gentils, & the glory of his people Israel: yet for as much as the due time was not yet come in which he should be shewed to the Gentiles before the resurrection, he was content in the person of the Mediatour, to keepe him selfe within the boundes of his calling: but he could not be hid altogether, because God had appointed this woman of Canaan to finde him out, which thing from Christ by his diuine knowledge could not be hidden. And here the wonderful secrete of Gods iudgement is to be cõsidered, while he walked openly in the land of Iewry amongest the chosen people to whom he was promised, & allured all men to come vnto him, he findeth but few (in comparison of the multude that withstood him) which regarded to be partakers of his grace which he offered: But so soone as he stepeth out of Iewry among the Gentiles, desiring not to be knowen, he is found out by a woman, which in a maner compelleth him to bestow his grace vpon her, when he denieth it. The circumstances being weyghed & compared with them from whom he came, doth set forth their blockish blindnes, and also marueilously cõmend her inuincible faith. They wer wise men, she was a simple woman: they were learned, shee was igno-

Luke. 2.

tant: they were Iewes, she was a Gentile: they were of the blessed seede of Abraham, she was of the cursed race of Canaan: they were of the chosen people of Israel, she was of the excommunicate & cast out people of the Cananites: they wer brought vp in the knowledge of God & his lawes, euen from their infancie, she was brought vp in the superstitiõs of idolatry: they were Doctors & teachers of Gods people, she had but smal knowledge, as one ỹ was an heathen woman, and therfore might not come into the congregation where Gods people were taught. Yet they reiected Christ when he was offered, she folowed Christ whẽ he departed from her: They were Infidels, she was faithful, and endued with such fayth as might be a shame to all the Israelites that began so long before her, & yet were left so far behind her. For of her it might be said which our sauiour Christ speaketh of the faith of the Centurion: Verely I haue not foũd such faith in Israel. The Centurion was an heathen man, a Romane, a man of warre that came to subdue the slauish nation of ỹ Iewes, yet God gaue him so great fayth, that he excelled euen the Israelites them selues. And surely if the circumstances of this poore womans fayth be considered, it shall appeare far more excellent then hys. And especially if we behold wyth

Math. 8.

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what bitter temptatiõs her faith was exami-ned and tryed, we shall playnly confesse how far it passed: for her fayth was tried vnto the vttermost. And first wyth great and extreme aduersitie: for her Daughter was miserably tormented wyth a Deuyll.

Good Lord what a temptation was thys to her that was of the cursed Socke of the Cana-nites, which Gods people were commaunded vtterly to destroy, & to make no leage or coue-nant with them: then hauing newly forsakē the religion of her forefathers & people where she lyued, & lately receiued the religion of the Iewes: What a great temptation (I say) was it to her, that her daughter should be pos-sessed with the Deuil: She might either haue thought that she had made an euyl chaunge of her old religion, to be thus welcomed by the Deuil into a new religion: Or els, that God the author of this religion, would not accept her to be one of his worshippers, being a cur-sed Cananite, & therfore suffered the deuyl to haue such power ouer her daughter, as that he did wholy possesse her, and miserably torment her. For of al aduersities that can be layd vpō a man or woman this goeth nerest, to make them think they are out of the fauour of God, to behold that they are geuen ouer as it wer a pray into the Deuils possession. The lesse of

childzen

childzen is one of the greateſt griefes that can befal to louing Parents, but the death of childzen may be counted an exceeding great benefit in comparison of this, to ſee them poſſeſſed & tozne in peces with diuels. They that are dead, are out of payne, but they that are thus poſſeſſed, ſeeme to be in paynes of hell, euen while they lyue: What might this powre woman thinke otherwyſe in thys caſe, but that ſhe had hell in her own houſe, when ſhe had the Deuil tozmenting her daughter at home, whom ſhe loued beſt in the wozld?

We ſee therfozе how ſhe was tried, firſt by this temptation: And experience teacheth vs how many are offended & driuen backe wyth much leſſe temptation then this. Foz if aduerſity oz affliction folow their new converſion, they ware weary of their profeſſion, & wiſh againe foz the mery wozld which they enioyed, and the pleaſant life which they paſſed in idolatry, ſuperſtition, and ignozance of God: oz els through infirmity and weakenes of fayth, they thinke that they are out of the fauour of God, that ſendeth them ſuch troubles, whych were wont to liue in quiet. But this powre woman neither myſliketh her profeſſion, noz miſtruſteth Gods mercye foz this moſt greeuous temptation: But contrariwiſe by foze of faith ouercõmeth all difficulties. Foz wher

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as she was a Gentile, or as S. Marke calleth her a Greeke, which in the phrase of the scripture is all one, & that which is more, a Cananite, whose auncestors being driuen out of the land of promis, fled into Syrophœnicia, which country next adioyneth vnto Iewry: yet all this did not let her, but that she was perswaded that the Messias of the Iewes partayned also vnto her. And therefore vpon assurance of this fayth, she is bold to come vnto Christ, and to make humble request vnto him for the reliefe of her misery. Mark.

But for asmuch as Christ had not yet preached among the Gentiles, & moreouer had expressly cõmaunded his Apostels that they should not go into the way of the Gentiles, no not so much as into the Cities of the Samaritanes, which partly professed ỳ religiõ of the Iewes: it may be marueiled vpon what confidence she came so boldly to our sauiour Christ, & so importunately desired grace of him, ỳ she would haue no nay, vntyll she obtayned her request. We must needes acknowledge, ỳ as she was instructed in the law of God, so she toke hold of the general promises of God set forth in the law & the Prophets, and in the Psalmes, on which her faith was so lyuely grounded, that nothing in the world was able to remoue her from it. For as the hope of ỳ promised redẽp- Math. 1

Luk. 24

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tion was openly talked of among the Iewes, so the promises of God cõcerning Christ their redeemer were cõmonly knowen among thẽ, as: That all nations of the world should be
Gene. 12. blessed in him: That whosoeuer calleth vpõ
and 8. the name of the Lord, shalbe saued: That he
and. 12. shall delyuer the poore when he cryeth, the needy also, and hym that hath no helpe: He
Ioel. 2. shalbe mercyfull to the poore & needy, and shall preserue the soules of the poore: Hee
Psal. 72. shal redeeme their soules from deceipt & violence, and deare shall their bloud be in hys
Esa. 28. sight: That he that putteth hys trust in hym, shall not be confounded. Vpon these & such like general promises of God, contained in the old Testament, her fayth was builded & founded so stedfastly, that no storme of temptation was able to ouerthrow it. Which thyng is very necessary for vs to consider, ỹ when our fayth shal be tried & examined, as this womãs was, we may know how to withstand all the assaults of most greuous temptations, as she did. That the trial of our fayth, which is much
1. Pet. 1. more precious thẽ gold that perisheth (though it be tryed by fire) myght be found vnto our praise, honour & glory, at the appearing of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Let vs therefore make much of the general promises of God, let vs willingly embrace thẽ, diligently weigh them

and

and dayly remember them: For in them our faith being grounded, it shal stand like a most sure bulwark & invincible fortres against any thing ỳ shal assault our everlasting salvation.

Upon thys boldnes & confidence this wretched woman commeth vnto Christ. For thus her faith concludeth: Seing all nations of the world shalbe blessed in him, ỳ very Cananites are not excluded. For although the Cananites were once cursed of God above all other nations, yet by this blessed séde all curse should be take̅ away, seing he is not restrained to one nation more then a nother, but is the common blessing vnto all nations. And seyng he shall heare the powre that crieth vnto him, & succour the nedy that hath none other helper, he must hears me also beyng so powre a creature & helples that crieth vnto hym. And for as much as whosoeuer putteth his trust in him, shall not be confounded, he cānot refuse my humble request that repose my whole trust & confidence in him. Therfore she is bold with opē mouth to cry out vnto hym: O Lord thou sonne of Dauid, haue mercy vpon me.

These wordes are diligently to be considered: first, that through confidence of fayth, although he do not cal vnto her, yet she crieth after him. And the vehemency of her request is expressed by the word of crying, that she doth

not speake vnto him, but with open mouth she
cryeth vnto hym. For a strong faith sendeth
forth earnest requestes, as a feble faith vtte-
reth cold & formall prayers. And concernyng
the forme of her petition, it declareth that her
faith was not a conceiued fantasie of her own
braine, but an assured perswasion out of the
word of God. For seing that Messias was pro
mised to be the sonne of Dauid, & that all feli-
cities was promised in ỹ kyngdome of Dauid,
according to the holy Oracles of God, she cal-
leth Christ the sonne of Dauid. For she had
Sam.17. learned that God sayd of Messias, figured in
the person of Salomon, which was the sonne
of Dauid: I wyl be his father, and he shall be
Cron.22 my sonne, She had heard ỹ prophecy of Esay
that God promised that out of ỹ old wythered
Esay.11. stump of Jsay the father of Dauid, a rod should
come forth, & a graffe should grow out of his
rootes. The spirit of ỹ Lord shal rest vpō him:
The spirit of knowledge & vnderstandyng. &c.
And that which Jeremy writeth of the ryght-
eous braunch that God would raise vp vnto
Jere.23. Dauid, which king should raigne and execute
And.33. iudgement, whose name should be, The Lord
our righteousnes: Vpon these or such like pla-
ces of Scripture her fayth was grounded, by
which she had learned to call him the sonne of
Dauid. Wherby she declared ỹ she acknow-

ledged

ledged him to be ỳ same which was described and set forth in the scriptures, & that she looked to obtain at his handes those thinges which were promised of him in the scriptures. In which it was promised that he should heare the cry of the poore when they made their humble supplication to him: that he should succour the afflicted, who had none to helpe them: that he should take vpon him all our infirmities, and beare all our diseases: that he should preach sight to the blynd, lyms to the lame, life to the dead, and deliuerance to all that are afflicted. Esa.22. Math.8. Luke.4. Math.11.

This request of hers therefore, being in the compasse of those thinges which were promised to be graunted by him, she is bold to call & cry vnto hym saying: O Lord, thou sonne of Dauid, haue mercy vpon me, my daughter is miserably tormented with a deuil. And note that she desireth him to be mercyful vnto her, wher as her sute chiefly concerned her daughter. For not oneiye the naturall loue of her daughter made her to accompt the miseries of her childe to be her own griefe, but also she acknowledgeth ỳ God in plaging of her daughter, plageth the mother also, & therfore she desireth Christ to haue mercy, pity & compassion of her selfe, as well as of her daughter. And further note, ỳ she challengeth nothing by desert, merit or worthynes, but onely of mercy,

pity and compassion, saying: Haue mercy vpon me Lord, thou sonne of Dauid.

Hetherto ye haue heard how her faith was firmly fastned vpon the promises of God, and that she endured the trial of a mighty & strong temptation, her daughter being possessed with the Deuyl, which was so farre of that it could ouerthrow her faith, that rather it was an occasion whereby her fayth was shewed to bee most inuincible, & set forth for one of the chiefest examples of the greatest fayth that euer was in the world. But ther remain yet more greeuous temptations, wherby her fayth was ten times more vehemently assaulted then euer it was before. For it followeth in the text: And he answered her not a word. This was a maruelous sore temptation: that he in whō her whole trust was reposed, is so far of from graunting her petition, that he seemeth to disdayns to make answer to her request. That he which calleth & alloureth vnto him al other, refuseth so much as to speake to her. That he which offereth hys helpe to them that seeke it not, wyll not heare her humble suts that doth so earnestly craue it. What might she thinke but that all her labour was lost, all her hope was in vaine, & all that euer she heard of him was vntrue. Is this he that is so curteous & gentle to all them that require his helpe? Is

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this he that made a general proclamation saying: Come vnto me all ye that labour & are laden, and I wyl refresh you? Is this he that neuer denied his gracious fauour to any y desired the same? The other temptation by the miserye of her daughter was very great, but this tryal by the silence of Christ, in whō onely she hoped for helpe, was much greater.

And by this temptation also God trieth his seruants, that he doth not onely send them affliction and misery to molest them, but oftentimes also when they pray for helpe & deliuerance, he seemeth both deafe & dombe, for as though he heard not their prayers he maketh no answer, but suffereth them to continue styl in misery: notwithstanding that he hath promised to heare their prayers when they call vnto him out of their troubles. And not thys onely, but as he dealeth here with this womā whom he disdayneth to answer, so he seemeth not onely to refuse their prayers, but also in stede of helpe which they pray for, he sendeth them greater troubles, agaynst which they pray. We se howe often the Prophet in the Psalmes complayneth that God is deafe or dombe, & he heareth not his seruantes which pray vnto him. So he encreased the calamities of the Israelites vnder Pharao, frō that tyme that Moises and Aaron had put them in

Psal. 2
10. &. 1
Iob. 30.
Exod. 5

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some comfort of deliueraunce. So thys poore woman no doubt reioyced not a litle, whē she heard that Christ was come into those quarters: but when she commeth vnto him, whom she was glad that she had found, she findeth no comfort at al in him, but great discouragemēt & discomfort, if any thyng could discourage a strong & liuely faith. We see therfore what a strong temptation her fayth endured.

But it is marual how she could retaine such constancie of fayth, when he that is the onely Author and finisher of our fayth, euen Iesus Christ, disdayneth to speake to her, in whose word all our hope and trust consisteth. But here we must vnderstand that Christ by thys his silence did not reiect her sute, but rather inflamed her with greater feruencie to continue the same. For although he suppressed his audible voyce for a tyme, yet in tyme of thys silence he spake vnto her by two most effectuall kindes of speaking: First, by his generall promises contayned in the Scripture, which sounded so lowd cōtinually in the eares of her hart, that by them she was assured ỹ Christ called her vnto him, although by his temporal and particular silence he seemed to reiect her from hym. Secondlye, although he spake no word with his tounge, yet by his spirit he spake continually to her soule, setling & sealyng the truth

Hebr. 12.

truth of Gods promises so stedfastlye in her hart, that she knew it was vnpossible for her to mysse of his grace at the length, although for the tyme she seemed to be refused of hym. And so vndoubtedly almighty God dealeth often times euen with his best beloued children, when he differreth ẏ answer of their request for a time, so that he seemeth to hold his peace, notwithstanding that he hath promised to answer them whē they pray. In which perplexitie they must remember, that how so euer he seemeth to keepe silence by not graũting their request, yet he speaketh to them continually in his promises contained in his holy word, by which they must be assured that God wyll be mercyful vnto them, albeit that he withhold his promised helpe for a season. So Christ at one time speaketh and holdeth his peace, not to extinguish the faith of this Cananite, but rather to enflame her earnest affectiō in prayer, which thing we se take effect in her.

Then if so smal light of knowledge as was possible to be in her, accordyng to the state of the tyme, & her own condition wrought such constancie of faith: if so litle seede of doctrine brought foorth suche abundant fruit: what shame is it for vs in so cleare light of the Gospel, not to fix with the eyes of our faith the vnmoueable & vnchaungeable truth & certaintie 1. Pet. 1.

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of Gods promises, and hauing receiued such abundance of the immortall seede, to bryng forth so small fruit, that we are discouraged to continue our prayers, if we finde not present helpe so soone as we begyn to pray: And that we doubt in our hartes of the truth of Gods promises, because we fele not the execution & fulfillyng of them, euen at suche tyme as we would appoint our selues. Not remembryng that he which hath promised to heare vs whē we pray, hath cōmaunded vs to be importunate in prayer. And hath set before vs thexample of the pore wydow to be followed, which
Luke. 18 hauing a matter to be heard before a wycked Judge, that feared neither God nor man, yet at the length obtayned iustice at hys handes throughe her importunity. And shall not God much rather delyuer hys Elect that cry vnto him day and night, whom he hath promised to heare & helpe? If therfore we be not heard at the first, we must not therfore geue ouer prayyng, but rather increase in study and zeale of prayer, knowing yt it is Gods pleasure in such a case to bee ouercome by importunate sute. For if the thing we pray for be within the cōpasse of those thinges which he hath promised to graunt, he cā no more deny our request, then he can deny him self, if we continue in prayer.

But flesh & blood wyl here obiect to weaken our

our faith; what comfort haue I to pray, when I shal be heard I cannot tel when? For I haue prayed long, & finde no release of my troubles, but rather increase, & while he differreth hys helpe (I know not for what cause so long) in the meane time I shall perish. I were better therefore to see if I can finde any comfort els wher, for none I find in him. For answer we must consider two things, that if we loke to obtaine any helps at Gods hands by our prayers, we must geue God this honour, that he knoweth better then we our selues, both what is meete for vs, & also at what time it is best to bestow it vpon vs. For he which knoweth all things, knoweth when it is most conuenient both for his glory, & for our profit, is graunt vs that which we pray for. And ther is no louing childe of God (if these two might be seperated) but woulde preferre the glory of God before his own profit. And ther is no wise man that wyl take vpon him to knowe better when his profit is to be procured, then God who is the onely wisedome him self. But seing these two things are alway linked together, namely the glory of God & our saluation, we nede no more to doubt that God wyll be lesse carefull for our saluation, then he is zealous for his owne glory. Therfore it is a vaine obiection, & suppose th a meere impossibility, that we shuld

periſh before he ſend his deliuerãce. For God can no more forget our deliuerance in due time, then he can deface his own glory.

And touching the meane tyme in which he ſuffereth vs to be afflicted, that all ſhall turne to our euerlaſting cõfort, for thereby he trieth our faith, patience, obedience, and other vertues. And the tryall of our fayth, as S. Peter ſayth, beyng muth more precious then golde

1. Peter. 1. which is tried in the fire & yet periſheth, ſhall be found to our prayſe, honour & glory, at the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And leſt we ſhould doubt to faint in troubles, we are taught that God is faythful, & wyll not ſuffer

1. Cor. 10. vs to be tempted aboue our ſtrength, but in al perplexities & moſt deſperate caſes wyll open a way how we ſhall auoyde them. For as he ſendeth vs affliction and temptation with the one hand, ſo he wyl ſend vs ſtrength and comfort with the other hand. And this was lively

Geneſ. 23. figured in the wreſtlyng of God with Jacob: where the Lord by wreſtling & ſtriuing wyth him, ſeemed to fight with him with one hand, and by geuing him ſtrength not onely to abide temptations & afflictions, but alſo to preuaile and to ouercome them, he declared that he did ſuſtayne him with the other hand.

Let vs not therefore be diſcomforted if God himſelfe ſeeme to wreſtle wyth vs, & to fight

againſt

against vs by sendyng vs great troubles and temptations, for hys purpose is in thys most noble combate, both to geue vs strength to ouercome, and also the prayse of the victory, as S. Peter testifieth in the place euen now alledged. Such a noble champion was this simple woman, that by fayth contended euen wyth Christ him selfe, and in the ende obtayned the victory. Declaring therby, that although she wer a cursed Cananite according to the flesh, yet she was a true Israelite by fayth, which prevailed euen with God him selfe. Such & so wonderful are the workes of God, that when al ỹ glory of our saluatiõ is properly his own, yet he vouchsafeth to geue vs such strength of faith, that therby we are receiued into part of that praise which is due vnto him, but yet so ỹ all the glory redoundeth againe from vs vnto him onely, to whom properly it belongeth.

Wel, hetherto we haue heard ỹ our sauiour Christ refused to speake one word wyth hys mouth, & yet inwardly he spake by his spirite to her myndes: It followeth now in the text, That his disciples came vnto him & besought him saying, Send her away, for she crieth after vs. Here his Disciples do not intreate him to shew her any fauour, but onely to dispatch her either one way or other, because she made such a bawling and crying after them, ỹ they

were ashamed to heare her. And herein as in many other thinges reuealed in the history of the Gospell, they take vpon them to be wyser then their Master. For if he had thought it conuenient, he would haue dispatched her sooner, for he heard her importunate outeries as well as they, but hee respected another matter, which they could not conceiue. It were best therfore for men to let God alone wt̄ his owne affaires, & not to presume to geue him counsel what he hath to doo, but rather to looke what he cōmaundeth them to do, & therin to occupy their heads & their hands. But such curiosity raigneth in many mens myndes, that they had rather take vpon them to teach God how he should gouerne the world, then submit themselues quietly to obey his cōmaundements.

But the Papists are here to be pytied, that for lacke of better argumentes to proue the inuocation of Sayntes, are fayne to abuse this place of the Apostels request, to haue this woman dispatched: But alas wt̄ what colour of likelyhood of reason? For first this womā desireth none of them all to be her spokesman, but crieth vnto the Maister himself: O Lord thou sonne of Dauid, haue mercy vpon me. Secondly, they make no intercession for her, but onely desire that she might be sent away, because she troubled them. But whether he

obtained

obtained her request or no, all was one to the, so they might be ryd of the exclamation & outcry that she made after them, to cause all the world to wonder at them. Thirdly, Christ graunteth nothing at their request, but rather flatly denieth y he will haue any thing to do with her. Fourthly, if she had praied to them, and they made intercession for her, & obtained their desire: yet there is great difference betwene praying to them that are dead, & praying to them that be alyue. And therefore it is maruail what they meane to gather an argument for the inuocation of dead Sayntes out of this place, where neither the woman praieth to the Apostles, nor the Apostels pray for her, nor Christ graunteth any thing at their request, & beside all this, the Apostles wer not dead, but alyue. They should haue smal comfort I trow, in this example: yet such for all the world be the rest of their argumẽts. The virgin Mary praied for the Bridegroom when she sayd, They haue no wyne: If this was a request, what was her answer? woman what haue I to do with thee? But aboue the rest they haue one notable example of the rytch man, that being in the torments of hel, praied vnto Abraham. No doubt a worthy example for vs to follow, that of a damned spirit in hel vs must learne to make our praiers to saints

John. 2.

Luke. 1

in

in heauen. By such authority the doctrine of Deuils may wel be established: but the children of God are taught an other forme of prayer by their heauēly Scholemaister. But what remedy found the ritch man by praying to Abraham, that we might be encouraged by his example to pray to Saints? He made two requests, & neither of them both was graunted. Alas what comfort should anye man take by these examples to pray to dead Saints? & yet these be the best reasons they haue out of the scripture. Sure it is a pityfull case that men wylleaue God, who hath commaunded vs to
Psal. 50. call vpon him, & promised to heare vs: to call vpon dead men, to whom we haue no commaundement nor example of any godly person to pray, neither haue they made any promise: neyther if they had made any promise, were they able to performe it.

But let vs leaue the Papistes vñ their wastful argumentes, and returne to the Apostels in their request made vnto Christ: Dismisse her (say they) for she cryeth after vs. By these words we may easely perceiue how importunately she continued her sute, although he held his peace, and answered her not one word: for styl she cried & was nothing discouraged, whereby we see that this first repulse did so litle deminish her desire, that it kyndled it more

it more & more. And so doth God often times in suspending & differring the answer & effect of our prayers, prouoke vs most earnestly to pray: both that we may know of whom we haue receyued a benefit, & that we may the more esteeme it when we haue it, & so render worthy thanks to him that is the author of it. For such is our malignitie, that if we be preuented with Gods benefites (as often times we are) or els obtaine them immediatly vpō our request, we forget that we receiued them of God, & so become vnthankful for thē. Also we do not greatly esteeme those things which we haue not long wanted, nor much desired, wherby, as for small benefits & not great gifts we render slender thankes to God. Therfore God in great wisedom prolongeth some times the performance of his promised benefits, that men myght acknowledge of whom they obtain them, worthely esteeme them, thankfully receiue them, and profitably employ them.

But now let vs see what answer our sauiour Christ maketh to the request of hys Disciples: I am not sent (sayth he) but vnto the lost shepe of the house of Israel. An vncōfortable answer doubtles to the poore woman, wherby he pronounceth that he hath no cōmission of God to do any thyng for her, in as much as his vocatiō extended onely to the Israelits,

and

and she was one of the Gentiles and a Cananite. It was a great temptation vnto her before, that he in whom all health is promysed, & which willingly offered him selfe to all other, & by his comfortable voice did call all that are oppressed vnto him, kept silence to her alone: and being so earnestly entreated to extend his fauour to warde her, yet answereth not one word: but it is ten tymes greater, that now when he is vrged by hys Disciples to speake, he seemeth to put her out of al hope & comfort, because he was not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel, of which number she was none, & therfore might not looke for any fauour at his handes. And this answer which he maketh was not a pretensed aunswer to serue for ỹ time, but it was most true in dede. For although hee was not sent onely to the Iewes, yet was he sent first vnto the Iewes: and that wall of seperation which deuided the Iewes from the Gentiles, was not broken downe before the resurrection of Christ. And therfore in the tenth of this Gospel he forbad his Disciples to go into the way of the Gentils, or the Cities of the Samaritanes: but go rather (sayth he) vnto the lost sheepe of the house of Israel: Euen so he sayth now truly, I am not sent, but vnto the lost sheepe of the house of Israel.

Ephes. 2.

Math. 10

First

First therefore let vs consider the sence of these wordes, & afterward the waight of the temptation. Therefore that he sayth, he was not sent, he meaneth not that he was not sent at all, but that as yet it pertayned not to hys vocation to call the Gentiles, but the Iewes onely. For that he was also sent vnto ỳ Gentiles, appeareth plainly by the word of God in the Prophet Esay, where the Lord speaketh vnto our sauiour Christ in the person of a Mediator: It is a small thing that thou shouldest be my seruant to rayse vp the tribes of Iacob, and to restore the desolations of Israel: I wyl also geue thee for a lyght vnto the Gentyles, that thou mayest be my saluation vnto the endes of the world. Wherunto the Prophet Simeõ agreeth in his Canticle saying: Mine eyes haue sene thy saluation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, to be a lyght to lyghten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. These wordes of his therfore must be vnderstood of that present time in which he spake them. For as then he was not sent vnto the Gentiles, but vnto the lost sheepe onely of the house of Israel. Esay. 4

Luke. 2

By the lost sheepe of the house of Israel, he meaneth not the elect onely, but al the whole nation of the Iewes, with whom God made the couenaunt, & vnto whom the redemption

was promised, for vnto them al it was first of-
fered: which because it was of them refused,
it was afterward made cõmon vnto the Gen-
tiles. For our sauiour Christ acknowledgeth
a lyttle before hys passion, that he hath other
sheepe which wer not of the Jewish fold, whō
Iohn.10. he must bryng home, that there may be one
fold, as there is but one Pastor. And in that
most earnest and harty prayer which he made
immediatly before his death, wherin he com-
mendeth to God the preseruation of his Dis-
ciples, whom hee sent to conuert the whole
world, he prayeth generallye for his whole
Church, collected both of the Jewes and the
Iohn.17. Gentiles, saying: I pray not onely for these,
but for al thē that shal beleue in me through
their preaching, that they al may be one, euen
as thou father art in me, & I in thee, that they
also may bee one in vs, that the world may
know that thou hast sent me. So that the Is-
raelites haue now no priuiledge nor preroga-
tiue aboue the Gentiles. For in Christ Jesu
ther is neither Jew nor Gentile, for Christ is
Galath.3. now as common vnto the Gentiles, as before
he was proper vnto the Jewes. Then seyng
we be grafted into the body of Israel, this say-
ing is as comfortable to vs, as it was vncom-
fortable to this poore woman. For Christ can
now make no more excuse by his vocation for

his

we are all the Israell of God, though some times we wer Gentils, now we are Citizens with the Saintes, & of the houshold of God, though sometime we wer straungers frō the common wealth of Israel, & forreners from the couenants of promise. But this especially is worthy to be considered, ỳ Christ calleth them ths lost shepe vnto whom he was sent: In which saying we haue two thynges to be observed: first, that we must acknowledge that we are all lost, or els Christ hath nothing to do with vs. We must euery one confes with the Psalmist, ỳ I haue wandred like a lost shepe, O seeke thou thy seruaunt. They therefore that are proud in opinion of their owne good workes, & thinke to be saued by their deserts, are not for Christ to medle w̄al: for he is sent but vnto the lost shepe of the house of Israel, or as he sayd vnto the Pharisses: The whole haue no neede of the Phisition, but the sicke. First therfore we must acknowledge that we are altogether cast away, & that we haue no more wyt nor power to returne or saue our selues, then hath a shepe that is wandring in the wildernes among the Wolues, Beares, & Lyons. Secondly, if we confesse & finde our selues to be such, then are we here comforted, ỳ Christ is properly appointed of God to saue the lost shepe of the house of Israel, like as he

Ephe. 2.

Psal. 119.

Math. 9.

Iath.18. faith in a nother place: The ſonne of man is come to ſaue that which was loſt. And in S. Lukes Goſpell, concerning the conuerſion of Zacheus: The ſonne of man is come to ſeeke and to ſaue that which was loſt. Therefore it ought to be no diſcomfort vnto vs to confeſſe that we are vtterly loſt, ſaying therby we are aſſured that we appertaine vnto Chriſt, who came of purpoſe to ſeeke & to ſaue that which was loſt. O the wonderful wiſedome, power and mercy of God, ſhewed vs in Chriſt, that euen then when we feele our ſelues loſt, we are found: when we ſee our ſelues deſtroyed, we are ſaued: when we heare our ſelues cõdemned, we are iuſtified, onely in beleuyng theſe wordes: The ſonne of man is come, to ſaue that which was loſt. Let vs therefore wᵗ inuincible courage of fayth take hold of theſe generall promiſes of God, and apply them vnto our ſelues, as this poore woman did, & we ſhall finde it to bee true which our Sauiour Chriſt ſayth vnto vs: There is nothyng impoſsible vnto hym that beleueth.

Iath.17. Mark.9. k.11.

Let vs now conſider the waight of this tẽptation, how heauy it was for the woman to beare this anſwer: that where as ſhe dyd repoſe her whole confidence in him, he affirmed that he hath nothyng to do with her, becauſe he was not ſent, but vnto ỹ loſt ſheepe of the

heuſe

house of Israel. Of al other temptations it is the sorest, when the word of God seweth to be contrary to our hope. As when God cõmaun ded Abraham to kil his sonne Isaac, in whom his hope was that the promise should be fulfilled, as God him selfe had said: In Isaac shal thy seede be called, and my couenaunt wyll I establish with Isaac. After the same maner is it here with this poore Cananite, for euen by the woord of Christ, in whom she trusted for grace, according to the promises of God concerning him, she is excluded frõ grace, because she is a Gentile, and none of the lost sheepe of the house of Israel, to whom onely, and not to the Gentiles at that time he was sent to offer grace. What could be said more to discourage her, then to tell her that the promised redemption pertayned not vnto her? Agayne, who could haue bene chosen out of all the world, to put her so much out of comfort, as Christ him selfe? For if an Angell or an Archangell had come frõ heauen, & told her that Christ would not accept her petition, & bestow his grace vpon her, she might easely haue reiected him, because her faith was grounded vpon the woord of God, agaynst which if anye Angell should speake, we may hold him accursed. But whẽ the sonne of God him selfe, euen the promised Messias, in his own person, and by his own

Gene. 2

Gene. 2

Gene. 17

word,

word, which is the same truth in whych the Oracles of the Prophets were delivered, whē he him self refuseth her request, & denieth his grace to her, how can she retain any hope, but that her faith is quite ouercome, & al comfort taken away from her? And yet so mighty and strong was the fortresse of her faith, that this most bitter assaut preuailed not to ouerthrow it. For as though she had felt no discomfort at al by this his answer, she approcheth nere vnto him, & falling downe before him, she continueth her humble suts, saying: Lord help me.

And here we may see how much true fayth differeth from proude presumption: yea, we may plainly perceiue that true faith is alway ioyned with great humility. The Papists cal the assured confidence in Gods mercy, by the odious name of presumption, but rather we may iustly cal the proud perswasion that they haue of their own merites and deserts by the right name of presumption. For who so trusteth most in god, hath least opiniō of his own worthynes: as we may playnly see in this example of the Cananitish woman, who as she had most certayne perswasion & assurance of helpe in the mercy of God, so had she no presumption at al in her own worthynes. And yt she declareth plainly by her humble submissiō: Therfore she falleth downe at hys feete.

most

most lowly beseeching him to be good vnto her, & to succour her. Wherby she testifieth ỳ she requireth nothing of dutye, in respect of her own worthines, but onely of fauour & mercy, in respect of Gods promises. Wo be therfore vnto the Papists ỳ cal true humility presumption, & contrariwise pride they terme humility.

But here we may wel doubt how the faith of this woman should be so highly cõmended, when it seemeth to presume against the word of God, wher as true faith is alway groũded vpon the word of God. And secondly, seing al ỳ promises of God are yea & Amen in Christ, and be stedfast & established in Christ onely, when she beareth by Christes own mouth, ỳ the promised redemption pertayneth not to her, how can she continue her confidence in him? I answer, that first her faith was groũded vpon the word of God, which because she knewe most certaynlye to bee an vndoubted truth, she wyl not be brought from that by any thing that may seeme cõtrary vnto it. And what so euer she heareth of Christ, although she do acknowledge it to be true, yet she is perswaded that it is so true, that it taketh not away the truth of Gods former promises. And seing Gods general promises did appertayne to her ỳ did beleue them, she retaineth hope against al hope. And as Abraham beleued that

1. Cor. 1. 2. 2.

God

God would rayse vp Isaac from death to lyfe, to fulfil his promise, & therfore doubted not to obey the cōmaundement of God in sacrificing hym: so thys woman doubted not, but God must nedes finde a meane wherby his promises might be verified to her, howsoeuer Christ was not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. And therfore as she doth not reason nor dispute agaynst the woord of God, so shee doth styll simply continue her sute, and sayth: Lord helpe me. Which importeth as much as if she had sayd: Although thou art not sent to offer thy grace vnto the Gentils, but vnto the Iewes onely, yet in as much as God hath
say. 28. promised, that whosoeuer putteth his trust in thee, shal not be confounded, and I am one of those that put my trust in thee, thou canst not send me away confounded, and therfore helpe me. For Gods promise must needes be true.

Let vs learne here so firmly to hold the general principles of our saluation, ẏ we admyt nothing that may seeme contrary vnto them. For of this we may be assured, that how soeuer any thing may seme contrary vnto them, yet frō God proceedeth nothing either in word or deede that is contrary vnto them. And as for al the creatures of the world beside, if they should oppose & set them selues agaynst them, they are not able to preuaile. Therfore saint

Paule

Paule saith with great confidence: I am perswaded that neyther death nor lyfe, neyther Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor thinges present, nor thinges to come, neyther heigth nor depth, nor any creature can seperate vs frō the loue of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord. For if God be on our syde, who can be against vs: or if any be agaynst vs, how can they be able to hurt vs? But if God him self seeme to be against vs, whō haue we then to comfort vs? For the iustice of God pronounceth damnation to all that transgres his law. But for as much as God of his infinite mercy hath promised saluatiō to all penitent sinners, he hath found a meane by which both hys iustice is satisfied, & yet no penitent sinner ỳ beleueth his promise shalbe damned. Roma. 8

This onely meane is Christ our Sauiour, who by his obedience hath throughly satisfied for all our disobedience and transgression, as many as beleue to haue remission of our syns by hym. Seyng therefore we haue not onely the general promises of God contained in the old Testament, but also the ful execution, performance & establishment of them in Christ: what shame is it for vs, to be found inferiour in faith to this Cananitish woman, which had no more but the first: wherunto neuertheles she cleaued so fast, ỳ by no meanes she would

be drawen from them. And surelye euen the very generall promises of God are sufficient that our fayth being builded vpon them, should neuer be removed. For by them God hath so bound him self vnto vs, that by no meanes he can revoke his promised saluation. And yet for more confirmation, and to take away all scruple of doubt and wauering, as the Apostle saith to the Hebrues, he hath established them with an othe, that by two thinges immutable (in which it is impossible that God should lye) we might haue consolation & comfort, as many as flee for refuge to take hold of the hope y is propounded and set forth vnto vs.

Therfore the anker of our fayth hath two most vnchaungeable holdes, namely the promise of God, and the othe of God: In both which it is impossible that God should lye. For as it is impossible that God should lye whē he simply affirmeth: so is it more impossible (if there may be degrees in impossibilities) that God should lye when he sweareth. And as it is impossible y God should lye or be forsworn: so is it impossible that anye man or woman, which taketh hold of Gods promises by fayth, should mysse the performance of them, whatsoeuer seemeth to be lets or impediments vnto them. For ther can be no let or impedimēt so great, as should be able to compell God to

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lying or periury, which be as great impossibilities as can be thought of. For if the generall or vniuersall promises of God should not be graūted to any one person that embraceth them by faith, God should be no more true of his word & his othe, which is as impossible as that God should be no more God. For example, seyng God hath sayd: whosoeuer calleth vpon the name of the Lord, shall be saued, if I poore wretch embracing this promis of God by fayth, do call vpon the name of the Lord, what soeuer lets or impedimentes be in the way, it is impossible but that I shall be saued. Therfore if all the Angels in heauen should tel me on their own credit, or as it wer by Gods commaundement, that I should be damned, I must hold them all accursed, rather then to graunt that God should be a lyer or pertured person. And for as much as Christ hath sayd: who soeuer beleueth, and is baptised, shall be saued, if I beyng baptised into the name of Christ, repose my whole trust & confidence in him: whatsoeuer can be obiected against me, I must of necessity be saued. For neither the iustice of the law, nor the giltynes of my syn, nor the accusation of the Deuyl, nor wytnes of myne own conscience, shall be able to condemne me, so long as I depend vpon the promise of God. For there is now no condemna- Roma. 8

Loel. 2.

tion to them that are in Christ Iesu. For what soeuer can be obiected out of the worde of God, how soeuer contrary at the first sight it may seemde to be, yet it is not in deede directly contrary to these & such lyke generall promises. As these sayinges: They that are in Christ, walke not after the flesh, but after the spirite: If Christ be in you, the body is dead vnto syn: They that are Christes, haue crucified the flesh with the lusts and concupiscence therof. It is manifest that these and such lyke places are not to be vnderstod of perfect innocencye free from all syn, but onely of such innocencye as is but inchoacted & begun in this lyfe, and made perfect in the lyfe to come. Therfore if thou feelest in thy selfe with thy fayth in God, an hatred of syn, & a desire of ryghteousnes, which refraineth thee from much wickednes, & styreth thee vp to some workes of vertue, although there remaine in thee the relickes of syn, yea a lust vnto syn, contrary to the spirit of God, which also breaketh out some tymes into actual syn: yet by the spirit of Christ that dwelleth in thee, thy body is dead vnto synne, thou hast crucified the flesh with the lusts and concupiscences therof, thou walkest in the spirit, & not in the flesh, and therfore according to Gods promis thou shalt be saued through thy fayth: For thy syns and infirmities shall not

oma. 8.

alath. 5.

oma. 4.

be im-

be imputed vnto thée, but the righteousnes of Christ shal be imputed to thee by fayth.

Let vs therfore admit nothing y may séeme contrary to our assured confidence, which is grounded vpon the woord of God: for in the woord of God ther is nothing contrary to it, & what soeuer els doth withstand it, it is of no force to ouercome it. For heauen & earth shal passe, but the woord of God shal not passe. But let vs folow the fayth of this woman, which though she had neuer so many repulses, yet would she neuer be driuen away, vntyll she had obtayned her request: Yyll crying, Lord helpe me, as though she would say: thou maiest well differ thy helpe, but thou canst not denye it me. Yet for what answer Christ maketh vnto her: It is not good (saith he) to take the Chyldrens bread, and cast it to the whelpes. What an hard & vncurteous answer is thys? Not onely to deny her humble request, but also to accompt her no better thē a Dog, & to tel her that it is no more reason y she should obtaine her sute, then that bread should be taken from childrens mouthes, & geuen to a Dog. Mat. 24

What a great temptatiō was this? that he which onely hath the bread of lyfe to bestowe vpon all that be wyl, doth compt her no more worthy to haue part of it, then a Dog to eate y which is prouided for the sonnes of God. For

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seing that God made a cousnant wyth Abra-
ham & his seede, they onely were the sonnes of
God, and therfore those special graces & giftes
of God that were appointed for them, were so
proper vnto them, as who soeuer should make
them common to the Gentiles, should abolish
the couenaunt of God. Christ therefore wyth
all his benefites, was the bread appoynted to
fede the holy chyldren of God, whych at that
time were the Iewes onely. Al other nations
of the world were but prophane Dogs, & ther-
fore not worthy to be fed with that holy bread
which was ordained for Gods own chyldren.
Therfore this Heathen woman presuming to
leape vpon the table of Gods children lyke an
vnmanerlye Cur, deserued euen lyke a Cur
Dog to be beaten downe, and whipped out of
the house, rather then that the childrens bread
should be taken frō them, & cast vnto her. For
so much is implyed in the woordes of Christ.
For as it were not meete for hym to take the
childrens bread, and cast it to Dogs, so she like
an importunate Dog, readys to pull it out of
their mouthes, deserued great punishment.
Alas poore woman, how could she auoide this
temptation: And yet by force of faith she foūd
meanes how to wythstand this most eger as-
sault, and in the end to obtaine the victory.

But here to beate downe the pryde of the

flesh,

flesh, wo are taught what we are al by nature and without Christ, euen no better then Cur Dogs. For this which Christ sayth of Dogs, is ment of all the Gentiles & Heathen people, as we are all, Emperours, Kyngs, Nobilmē, Gentlemen, wisemen, valiant men, richmen, poore men, all Dogs without Christ. For although man by his first creation was the most excellent of all creatures in the world, and indede the sonne of God: yet by his fal & transgression, he is become the baset and the vilest, and no better then a Dog, except he be raysed vp and restored by the benefit of our onely saviour Iesus Christ. By this we se what merits or worthynes wee haue to pleade before God, and like wyse what cause we haue to be proude among men. Which thing if all men would consider, that by kynde without Christ they are no better then Dogs, they would learne to make lesse of their paynted sheathes, and more to esteeme the benefite of Christ, by which they excell, if they finde them selues to be better by grace, then they are by nature.

But to returne to thys poore woman: Although she be called & accompted of Christ no better then a Dog, & that she wyllingly confesseth: yet she wyll not therefore geue ouer her sute, because her fayth could not be ouerthrowne by thys assault. For of faith proceedeth

Rom,10. deth invocation and earnest calling for Gods helpe & salvation. For although the answer of Christ seemeth to take away all hope from the Gentiles, yet because she knewe that he was promised also to the Gentiles, she is certainly perswaded that this promise must take effect, & that doth Christ himself partly signify by these wordes which are rehearsed by saint Marke.7. Marke: Let the Chyldren bee first satisficed, Wherby he sheweth that the first place was for the Jewes, which then wer the childzen of God. But thys helpeth not her, because the time was not yet come in which the Gentiles also should be made the childzen of God. And therfore she fleeth to an other refuge, & thus she answereth: Yea Lord, but yet the whelps eate of the crums that fal trō their lords table.

First by thys answer it appeareth howe much the certaintie of fayth doth differ from vayne & folish importunitie of ignorant persons, which wyll be answered by no reason, & yet haue no reason to continue their suite. For this woman doth not here directly contrarye the wordes of Christ, but sheweth how the wordes of Christ may be true, and yet she obtaine her request also. Therfore where as he had first said she was a Dog, she willingly cōfesseth it that she was no better then a Dog, it is true Lord saith she, I am no better. Secondly,

condly, where as he had said: It is not good to take the Childrens bread, and cast it to Dogs, she confesseth that also, saying: Yea Lord it is true, neither wyl I presume further then the place of a Dog, & that is vnder the table. For although it is not conuenient that Dogs should be equall with their Maisters at the table, yet they are allowed to waight vnder the table, & to licke vp some few crowms that fal from their Maisters. I know Gods children are so liberally & plentifully feasted at Gods table, that some litle crowms may fall from them, & they haue inough to satisfie them. No man in the world could deuise a more proper answer, to auoyde the obiection of Christ. For although the grace of God was peculiar vnto the nation of the Iewes, yet it was neuer so scantly & pinchingly poured vpon them, but that some drops might ouerflow vnto the Gentils. And although the bread was prepared according to Gods dispensation onely for the Children, yet it could not so sparingly be parted among them, but some crowms might fall from their table, vnto the Dogs that lay vnder & waighted for them. For Naaman the Syrian, the woman of Samaria, the Centurion, and some such other, were refreshed with some crowms that fell from the table of the children of God the Israelites, euen at such tyme when God

was knowen onely in Iewry, & Christ was proper vnto the Iewes. She graunteth therfore that Christ maye fulfill the office whereunto he was called of God, namely to satisfie the Iewes with the bread ordained for them, and yet let some crumms or chyppinges of the same fall downe to refresh her a poore whelpe that lay vnder the table.

Here also we may note the true humility y followeth this certayne perswasion of Gods mercy. This woman confesseth her selfe to be no better then a Dog, and yet she trusteth in the mercy of God. By this place also we may perceiue what horrible punishmēt the Iewes deserued at Gods hand, whych eyther negligently or disdaynfully loathed those daynties of Gods table offered vnto them, which other poore wretches so gredely desired, and could be content euen with the crumms that fell from their table. And we our selues also haue two matters here to consider: first the vnspeakable goodnes of God, which of our Dogs hath made vs his own children by adoption: and of such as had no place in the house of God, but of greatest fauour to lye vnder the table of his children, hauing conuerted vs from Dogs into his children, hath aduaunced vs to sit at his own bye table with his Children, euen with Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, as he sayth in the

Gospel:

Gospel: Many shall come from all partes of the world, and syt down with Abraham, Isaac and Iacob in the kyngdome of heauen, when the children of the kingdome shalbe cast out into vtter darknes, wher shal be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The second thing that we haue here to consider is, that we being turned frō Dogs into Gods children, do not restayne styll the nature of Dogs, that is, to returne againe to their filthy vomite, which they haue once cast out: ỹ being extolled to such dignitie that we are made partakers of Gods heauenly table, we do not behaue our selues vnreuerently, but thankfully, vnholyly, but as it becōmeth the children of God, the table of God, the presence of God, with all reuerence, obedience & thankfulnes, to expresse the nature of Gods children, vnto which honour we are called. Math. 8 2. Peter.

Ye know the punishment of him which presumed to syt downe at the mariage feast without his wedding garment, he was pulled out by the eares, and thrust into vtter darknes, wher shalbe waeping & gnashing of teeth. And the same penaltie remayneth all hipocrites, which intruding them selues into the Church of God, neuer care for repentance, newnes of life, holynes & righteousnes, wherunto we are called of God, & not to vncleanes & filthynes. Remember that whych was read in the first Math. 22 1. The. 4

Lesson this day at Morning prayer, cõcerning
Esau, who because he was a prophane felow,
that made no more account of hys birthright
ene. 25. (in whych was included all the hope of the
Church) but that he sold it for one messe of po-
ene. 27. rage, as the Apostle saith to the Hebrues, he
ebr. 12. was afterward depriued of the blessyng, and
coulde not bee restored vnto it, although hee
sought it wyth teares. Remember also the
Iewes, who beyng compted the Children of
God, for the couenaunt that God made wyth
their fathers: because they did obstinatly re-
fuse the grace when it was offered, & would
not beleue the promise whē it was exhibited,
they are broken of from the stocke of Israel, &
we that were straungers & braunches of the
wylde Olyue by kynde, are grafted into the
tree by fayth: But so, that if we fall frō fayth
(as S. Paule saith) God shall no more spare
oma. 11. vs, then he did spare them, yea we shall be bro
ken of, & they grafted in againe. For God is
able to graffe them in againe. Let vs therfore
continue in faith, and shew forth the fruits of
faith, for by the fruits the tree shal be knowen.

Hetherto we haue heard how the fayth of
this woman hath beene tryed to the vtter-
most, whych hauyng three repulses euen of
Christ himself, yet ceaseth not to put her trust
in him: Now let vs see what successe she had

in

in the ende. Although she had neuer so many repulses and discouragementes, yet because she continued styll constant and vnmoueable in fayth, she departed not away confounded. She obtained her request, she enioyed the promise, that who soeuer putteth their trust in him, should not be confounded. Let vs therefore with inuincible courage of faith holy fast vpon Gods promises, and it is impossible that we shall mysse of eternal saluation.

But some wyl peraduēture obiect, she sued here but for a temporall benefite, namely the recouery of her daughter, what pertayneth this to eternall saluation? I answer: Thys temporall benefite was to her a confirmation and assurance of euerlasting saluation, which she had conceiued by fayth. Which thyng the answer of Christ playnly declareth, who doth not onely graunt vnto this her faith the deliuerance of her daughter from the deuil, but generally what so euer she would: O woman (sayth he) great is thy fayth, be it vnto thee euen as thou wylt. First he commendeth the greatnes of her faith, by which he is ouercome that he can no longer wythhold hys grace frō her. Secondly he sayth, Be it vnto thee what soeuer thou wylt. Who doubteth but that she would as well haue remission of her synnes, and assurance of eternall lyfe, as the health of

her

her daughter, & rather to: Therfore he sayth: Be it vnto thee euen as thou wylt. As though he would say, with this faith thou mayest obtaine what soeuer thou wilt. Let vs therfore bryng suche a fayth to God, and we shall obtaine whatsoeuer we wyll.

Mark. 9.

If it were true would some man say, that I might haue whatsoeuer I would, I wold wish to haue this Church full of gold, or some such lyke matter. But ye must remember that Christ here speaketh of faith, which is grounded onely vpon Gods promises, and therefore what-soeuer ye wyll aske by fayth that God hath promised, you shall obtayne. Moreouer, they that be endued with true faith, wyl wish nothing that is contrary to Gods glory, and therfore there is no such vayne wishyng nor woulding with them. And therfore whatsoeuer God hath promised vnto them, they make their full accompt to obtaine it: that which he hath not promised, they require but vnder condition, if it may stand with hys wyll, and the setting forth of his glory.

Wherefore as we are taught by thys example, let vs in all temptations and afflictions flee vnto the generall promises of God, with inuincible courage of faith. For therof we shall be sure to preuayle in the ende, how soeuer it please God to try our fayth in

the meane time. For faith doth not onely ouercome the whole world, as 1. Iohn saith, which is in deede a noble victory, but faith preuaileth euen with God himselfe: when he proueth and trieth vs by most great temptations. Let vs therefore follow the fayth and confidence of Jacob, when he wrestled with God: For by fayth we wrestle with God when he proueth our fayth by temptation. Therefore as Jacob answered, when the Angell, which represented God that wrestled with him, requires him to let him depart, because it waxed day: I will not let thee go (quoth he) before thou bleſſe me: So let vs boldly answer God when he wrestleth with vs, assailing our faith by sundry temptations, we will not let thee go before thou bleſſe vs. For this example hath God left in writing for our comfort, and by this example he hath commanded vs by the Prophet Hosea to trust in God. For Jacob by fayth had power with God, & had power ouer the Angel, and preuayled, whereby he was called Israel, that is, one that preuaileth with God. And we, if we be true Israelites, by faith must preuayle with God. Therefore let vs not faynt in any temptations, but rather (as S. James saith) let vs reioyce when we fall into sundry temptations, knowing that the tryal of our faith worketh patience, which

1. Iohn.

Gene.

Hose.

Iames.

if she haue her perfect worke, we shall be perfect and sound, not faynting in any thyng.

Wherfore as temptations encrease, let vs encrease our confidence & prayers. Let vs say with the Prophet Dauid: Euen as the eyes of
Psal. 123. seruantes looke vnto the hand of their Maysters, and as the eyes of a Mayden vnto the hand of her Maistres, so our eyes waight vpon the Lord our God vntyll he haue mercy vpon vs. Finally let vs follow this woman of Canaan, whose fayth could not be ouercome by three repulses, euen of Christ him selfe, but in the ende obtayned euen that she would. For God by tẽptation seeketh not our ouerthrow, but our greater victory, that the tryall of our fayth which is much more precious then gold
Peter. 1 (which though it be purged with fyre, yet perisheth not) myght be at the last to our praise, honour, & glory, at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: To whom with the father and the holy Ghost be all honour, glory, power, and dominion both now and euer.

AMEN.